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OSCOLDCROSS RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR 1944.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1944. It is again in abbreviated form in accordance with official suggestions, the national circumstances not having yet returned to normal.

GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area of District 33,970 acres.	
Population, mid-year, Registrar General's estimate	7,092
Number of inhabited houses at end of 1944	2,113
Rateable Value	£28,825
Product of 1d. rate	£112

These figures show a further slight reduction in the population, presumably due again to movements in connection with present national circumstances.

The number of persons in the District under Government Evacuation Schemes fluctuated, being 85 at the beginning of the year and 152 at the end.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births.	Male	Female	Total
Legitimate	79	55	134
Illegitimate	7	5	12
Totals	86	60	146

Birth Rate per 1,000 population = 20.58

Still Births			
Legitimate	2	2	4
Illegitimate	0	0	0

Rate per 1,000 (Live and still) Births = 26.66
Rate per 1,000 population .56

DEATHS

	Male	Female	Total
All Causes	35	34	69

Death Rate per 1,000 population = 9.81

Puerperal Causes	0	0	0
Cancer	3	4	7
Measles	0	0	0
Whooping Cough	0	0	0
Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	0	0	0

Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age:-

All Infants per 1,000 Live Births = 48
There were 7 deaths of Infants under 1 year of age, 3 of the Infants being illegitimate.

The Vital Statistics for this year are somewhat remarkable, each item showing an improvement.

The number of Births was the same as the preceding year but the population being slightly less gives a slightly higher rate. This rate, 20.58 compares with 17.6 for the whole country, and is the highest since the District was altered to its present constitution.

The Death Rate at 9.81 is the lowest recorded for the District as at present constituted and is appreciably lower than that for the whole country, which is 11.6.

Over one-third of the deaths were of persons over 75 years of age, 16 having reached ages varying from 80 years to 90 years.

The Infantile Death Rate at 48 is lower than for several years and is nearer than usual to that for the whole country which is 46.

There were no deaths from Diarrhoea of children under 2 years old and another satisfactory feature is that there were no deaths from puerperal sepsis or other maternal causes.

Judged by the country as a whole these vital statistics can be regarded as satisfactory.

Principal Causes of Death.

Again Heart Disease accounted for the highest number of deaths, 14, this however being much lower than the 23 recorded the preceding year.

The next highest number was 10 for Intra Cranial Vascular Lesions.

Bronchitis again accounted for 8 but only 1 death was attributed to Pneumonia. Cancer declined from 8 to 7.

Infectious Diseases	No. of cases notified.	No. of Deaths.
Scarlet Fever	24	0
Whooping Cough	17	0
Diphtheria	4	0
Typhoid Fever	–	–
Measles	16	0
Pneumonia	5	1
Puerperal Pyrexia	–	–
Cerebro Spinal Meningitis	1	0
Opthalmia Neonatorum	–	–
Erysipelas	1	0
Tuberculosis		
Pulmonary	7	4
Other forms	2	1

The policy of immunisation against Diphtheria of children attending school was actively pursued. With the help of the school teaching staffs sessions are organised at the schools for the purpose and I have again attended at each school in the District to carry out the immunisation.

Immunisation, especially in respect of children under school age is also carried out by private practitioners in their normal practices.

The number of children immunised during the year were:-

Under 5 years.	5 - 15 years.	Total.
30	31	61

Children attending school who are now immunised vary from 86% to 97%, the average being 91% per school.

The number of children in the District under the age of 5 years is estimated to be 674, about 37.5% of which are immunised.

The consistently low incidence of Diphtheria appears to indicate good results of the immunisation policy.

SCABIES.

The arrangement for scabies cases to be dealt with at the Pontefract Joint Isolation Hospital continues and appears to be appreciated and effective. Fortunately there were less calls upon this service this year as the number of cases reported was much less than the preceding year. Further information on this subject will be found in the report of your Sanitary Inspector, Mr. Ledwith.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES.

These are also dealt with along with other matters in Mr. Ledwith's report and there appears nothing which I can usefully add thereto.

I again thank you for your consideration shown to me during the year,

and am Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

J. KEHELLY,

Medical Officer of Health.

RURAL DISTRICT OF OSGOLDCROSS.

ANNUAL REPORT OF SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR THE YEAR 1944.

NUISANCES.

Number of primary inspections		310
Number of cases in which nuisance found	294	
Number of cases outstanding 1943	11	
Cases to be dealt with		305
Abated 1944		286
Outstanding		19

No Statutory Notices were served.

The number relating to defective conditions at houses was 250.

HOUSING.

Action under Housing Acts & Regulations.

Number of houses inspected and recorded	24
Number unfit	1
Number defective but not totally unfit	11

There were no unfit houses rendered fit. One house which had previously been scheduled as unfit, but in respect of which no formal action had been taken, was vacated and was at once formally represented as unfit.

Action under the Housing Acts has remained practically at a standstill, only one seriously defective house having been repaired. Labour, and to some extent material available, has only enabled such works to be carried out as is dealt with under "Nuisances" and action under Public Health Acts.

The Rural Housing Survey has been much in mind but, pending recommendations of the County Committee, little actual survey work has been done. To cope with the survey and resultant work some assistance will be necessary. Should my clerk-assistant, now serving with the Forces, return in time this difficulty will be obviated. Otherwise some temporary assistance will be required.

I have been sitting on a committee of the Sanitary Inspector's Association which has been formulating standards of housing in connection with the survey for recommendation to the County Advisory Committee.

Action under Public Health Acts in addition to action as mentioned under "Nuisances."

Houses examined for vermin	6
Bugs found in three cases.	
Disinfested	3
Houses inspected in connection with water supply, sanitary accommodation, etc.....	96
Houses at which work required or undertaken	64
Houses at which work completed	51

No Statutory Notice was served, the work being carried out by the Council in default of the owner.

No new houses were erected. Plans for the erection of two houses were approved, assistance under Section 3 of the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1938 being contemplated.

The number of houses in the District at the end of the year was 2117.

WATER.

Probably the item of greatest interest under this heading concerns the Darrington Supply. This was owned and operated by a private estate and supplied most of the properties in the village. The Estate was sold during the year and the Council acquired the water supply scheme, which consists of several springs, the water from which is conducted to a collecting tank whence it is pumped to a reservoir and distributed by gravity mains.

The distribution arrangements were not suitable for operating by a local authority and a re-organization was commenced which when completed should ensure a satisfactory supply for the village.

The main source of supply for the District is the Pontefract Corporation Water Works, the water being distributed via the Rural District Councils mains to the parishes of Beal, Brotherton, Burton Salmon, Cridling Stubbs, East Hardwick, Egglborough, Fairburn, Hensall, Hillam, Kellington, Monkfryston, Whitley and Womersley. In a part of Fairburn village there has been some inconvenience at times through lack of pressure. Otherwise quantities have been adequate and quality satisfactory. Routine samples are taken periodically for bacteriological examination to check the quality.

About 40 houses have tap supplies via small private schemes.

The foregoing arrangements cover about 85% of the houses.

The remainder of the houses, some of which have mains supply available but are not yet connected, are dependent upon wells and pumps. Adequacy and quality vary.

The Council have earnestly under consideration the question of supplies to those parishes at present without mains supplies and the extension of mains to outlying parts of parishes with mains which do not serve the whole of the parish, and it is anticipated that under the operation of the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1944 the whole of the District will be fully served by water mains in due course.

SEWERAGE

In connection with a military camp at Byram Park a sewage disposal works was constructed at Sutton by the military authorities. Arrangements were made for the houses in Sutton hamlet to be connected with the sewer discharging into these works and for the Council to take over control of the works. This is a satisfactory disposal of a local sewerage and sewage disposal problem which was becoming more acute. It is anticipated that when the military camp is eventually closed the sewage disposal works will become available to serve the Council for a larger area.

Apart from the foregoing there has been no development regarding sewerage and sewage disposal. The position in most parishes continues to fall short of what can be considered satisfactory. The Council, however, have the matter seriously under consideration and with assistance under the Rural Water Supplies and Sewerage Act, 1944, it is anticipated that the whole District will in due course be adequately served.

SCAVENGING.

An accident to the refuse vehicle put it out of commission for several months. The hire of a vehicle to carry on the work was costly raising the total cost of the work for the year much above the original estimate.

With the one vehicle and small staff it has been difficult to cope adequately with the work. Complaints on the whole have been negligible The more frequent emptying of middens in some cases, however, is at least desirable.

Scavenging difficulties in some parishes in which the work has not been undertaken by the Council appear to be becoming more pronounced. The Council have given an undertaking to meet these difficulties when labour and vehicles are available.

There was still little change regarding sanitary accommodation. Two privies were superseded by W.C's. and an additional W.C. provided on farms at Womersley. At the end of the year there were in the District some 761 water closets, and 1,345 closets of other types. Dust bins numbered 654

SALVAGE.

Interest in salvage has been difficult to maintain. In places where public scavenging is not in operation salvage has largely resolved itself into refuse disposal. Material has been dumped indiscriminately entailing costly labour in preparing it for removal to say nothing of subsequent sorting and preparation for sale. Labour and transport difficulties increased rather than eased. Prices obtainable for some of the materials declined. It is therefore not surprising that there has been a trading loss, which amounted approximately to £56. Some value accrued from the service as refuse removal has to be set against the trading loss.

Materials sold during the year was as follows:-

	T.	C.	Q.
Paper and cardboard	11	1	0
Textiles (Rags & old bagging)	2	9	2
Bones		12	0
Tins (flattened)	7	11	2
Other iron	7	16	1
Other metals		12	2
Old boots & shoes		2	2
Cullet (broken bottle glass)	11	4	0
Glass bottles and jars	28 gross.		

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

There was again a slight increase in notification of Scarlet Fever, the number being 24 as against 21 the preceding year. The incidence continues fairly constant and is not high. Womersley had 7 cases all of which appeared to have originated in a case contracted by a child while visiting outside the District. The cases occurred from July to October. Fairburn also had 7 cases during March to May and November and December. The other cases were spread throughout the District and spread through the year.

The incidence of Diphtheria was again very low at 3, the same as in the preceding year. Again also 2 of the cases were in one family. Four cases were notified, but one case was found in hospital not to be Diphtheria.

The 9 cases of Tuberculosis (7 pulmonary) is an increase which appears to reflect the general experience of the country during the war years.

The one case of Cerebro Spinal Meningitis was a soldier in a camp the matter being dealt with entirely by the military authorities.

The number of cases of Measles notified was 16, a big reduction on the 193 notified the preceding year. The cases occurred mainly in Beal, Kellington and Cridling Stubbs from April to July.

Whooping Cough was the cause of 17 notifications against 8 the preceding year, 14 of these were in Brotherton in October and November.

Disinfection was carried out at 28 houses and one school.

SCABIES.

There were only half the number of cases reported as compared with the preceding year. It seems probable that the treatment now available at the Isolation Hospital has helped to bring about this welcome result. At any rate the treatment is usually take advantage of and appreciated by sufferers.

The number of cases reported was 30, of these 3 were women and the remainder children up to the age of 14 years. With the exception of 4 children of one family who were treated at home, all were treated at hospital.

the adults at the expense of this Council and the children at the expense of the County Council as the Education Authority. The numbers quoted include the second occurrence of the disease within 12 months of 6 children in a family whose mother was also affected and treated on the latter occasion.

MEAT & OTHER FOOD.

Slaughter of food animals continued centralised under Government control, none being carried out within the District. Again no unsound meat was found at butchers' shops, and the business generally was carried out in a satisfactory manner.

A bullock slaughtered in a farm yard in emergency was found to be affected with generalised Tuberculosis, and the carcase was appropriately disposed of.

Called in to a private house to examine some pork which was being cured for bacon I found some 30 lbs. had not "taken" and was disposed of as being unsound.

In a grocer's shop 40 lbs. of cheese was surrendered, and in another grocer's shop 10 lbs. of bacon was surrendered, both as being unfit for consumption.

With the exception of a small quantity of canned meat these were the only cases of unfit food that I encountered. In recent years eggs have been an item of unsound food but none came to my notice in the year under review.

MILK & DAIRIES.

After a few changes in registration the number of Producers registered at the end of the year remained at 88. Of these, 42 were carrying on a wholesale business and 21 a retail business; the remaining 28 merely selling small quantities to neighbours, not having any for sale at the moment, or making butter.

The cows numbered approximately 576 and the number of cowsheds in use was 113.

There were a few persons registered as retailing in the District but who had no premises within the District.

Two licences for the Production of Accredited Milk continued in force, and one Supplementary Licence for the Sale of Pasteurised Milk.

Samples of milk from one of the Producers on analysis were certified to be adulterated. Appeals to the cow samples were satisfactory. The offender was prosecuted and fined.

Five samples of Accredited Milk were bacteriologically examined. Two of these samples, from the same producer, did not satisfy the test but a subsequent sample did.

Several samples of non-designated milk were also subjected to the same test but did not satisfy the test. This standard is not enforceable for non-designated milk but is useful as a check upon the cleanliness of production and as a lever to improvement where necessary.

Regular testing under the National Milk Testing and Advisory Scheme has been introduced in the District, but this scheme is not administered by the Council and the results of the tests are not made known to the Council or their Officers.

191 visits were paid to dairy premises.

General conditions were more or less satisfactory though, with some exceptions, not up to pre-war standard.

It has again been difficult to get any structural work done owing to national circumstances, and beyond the adaptation of a milk room there is no new work to record.

The matter of cooling is not yet altogether satisfactory as regards the small dairies, the difficulty usually being the lack of a suitable water supply. Coolers were installed at three dairies during the year. Two producers gave up, partly on account of the cooling difficulties. Others are being pressed to instal the requisite equipment.

The emergency mortuaries and services in connection with civilian deaths due to war operations were kept in readiness but fortunately no incident occurred in this connection.

The Post-War Development Committee has had under consideration the position regarding water supplies, sewerage and sewage disposal, housing and scavenging, and have formulated proposals for general development and expansion of these services.

I have continued without clerical or other assistance, which obviously limits the time I am able to spend on the more technical side of my duties. It is hoped, however, that assistance will be forthcoming to help with the rural housing survey and other post war work.

GORDON LEDWITH

Sanitary Inspector.